<u>REMARKS</u>

This application has been reviewed in light of the Office Action dated June 23, 2004. Claims 1-92 are presented for examination and have been amended to define still more clearly what Applicants regard as their invention. Claims 1, 24, 47, and 70 are in independent form. Favorable reconsideration is requested.

Applicants note the indication that Claims 15, 23, 38, 46, 61, 68, 84, and 92 would be allowable if rewritten so as not to depend from a rejected claim, and with no change in scope. These claims have not been so rewritten because, for the reasons given below, their respective base claims are believed to be allowable.

Claims 1, 24, 47, 69, and 70 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as indefinite.

These claims have been carefully reviewed and amended as deemed necessary to ensure that they conform fully to the requirements of Section 112, second paragraph, with special attention to the points raised in paragraphs 2-7 of the Office Action. It is believed that the rejections under Section 112, second paragraph, have been obviated, and their withdrawal is therefore respectfully requested.

Claims 1-14, 16-22, 24-37, 39-45, 47-60, 62-67, 70-83, and 85-91 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,549,302 (*Takeda et al.*), in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,768,483 (*Maniwa et al.*).

As shown above, Applicants have amended independent Claims 1, 24, 47, and 70 in terms that more clearly define what they regard as their invention. Applicants submit that these amended independent claims, together with the remaining claims

31

dependent thereon, are patentably distinct from the cited prior art for at least the following reasons.

The aspect of the present invention set forth in Claim 1 is an information processor for generating printing data to be transmitted to a printer. The information processor includes an intermediate code conversion unit, a composition instructing unit, a discrimination unit, confirmation message display unit, and a setting unifier unit. The intermediate code conversion unit converts data to be printed which is generated by an application into a print job of an intermediate code format and temporarily stores the print job in association with print setting information for the data to be printed. The composition instructing unit instructs a plurality of print jobs of the intermediate code format converted by the intermediate code conversion unit to be composed together so as to generate one composed job. The discrimination unit analyzes the print setting information of the plurality of print jobs stored by the intermediate code conversion unit when the composition instructing unit instructs the plurality of print jobs to be composed together so as to obtain one composed job, and discriminates whether the plurality of print jobs have a same print setting or different print settings for a certain print setting item for which each print job is allowed to have one unique print setting. The confirmation message display unit displays, if the discrimination unit discriminates that the plurality of print jobs have different print settings for the print setting item, a confirmation message indicating that the different print settings should be unified to a common print setting, and the setting unifier unit generates the print setting information for the composed job based on the common print setting, after the confirmation message display unit displays the confirmation message.

Among other important features of Claim 1 are that the discrimination unit analyzes the print setting information of the plurality of print jobs stored by the intermediate code conversion unit when the composition instructing unit instructs the plurality of print jobs to be composed together so as to obtain one composed job, and discriminates whether the plurality of print jobs have a same print setting or different print settings for a certain print setting item for which each print job is allowed to have one unique print setting, the confirmation message display unit displays, if the discrimination unit discriminates that the plurality of print jobs have different print settings for the print setting item, a confirmation message indicating that the different print settings should be unified to a common print setting, and the setting unifier unit generates the print setting information for the composed job based on the common print setting, after the confirmation message display unit displays the confirmation message.

That is, the discrimination unit analyzes the stored print setting information of the plurality of print jobs in response to an instruction given by the composition instructing unit and discriminates whether the plurality of print jobs have the same print setting or different print settings for a certain print setting item for which each print job is allowed to have one unique print setting. The print jobs have the same print setting, for example, if duplex printing is set for all the jobs. The print jobs have different print settings, for example, if duplex printing is set for one job while simplex printing is set for the other jobs.

If the discrimination unit discriminates that the plurality of print jobs have different print settings for the print setting item, the confirmation message display unit displays a confirmation message indicating that the different print settings should be

33

unified to a common print setting. In the above latter example, the confirmation message indicates that the duplex and simplex print settings should be unified to the simplex print setting.

The setting unifier generates the print setting information for the composed job based on the common print setting, after the confirmation message is displayed. In the example, the print setting information for the composed job is generated based on the simplex print settings.

By virtue of the features of Claim 1, the problem that arises when a plurality of print jobs are composed of different print settings is solved.

The applied art, alone or in combination, is not seen to disclose or suggest the invention as defined by independent Claim 1, particularly with respect to the discrimination unit, the confirmation message display unit, and the setting unifier.

Takeda et al. relates to an image processing system which reads, for example, manuscripts and carries out image processing on the basis of the management information corresponding to the images of the read manuscripts. In the *Takeda et al.* system, an image forming apparatus uses a special sheet for dividing an original document comprising of a plurality of sheets. If one of the original sheets is erroneously detected as a special sheet, the original document may be determined to have two print jobs divided by the special sheet. In such a case, a user is allowed to change the attribute of the erroneously detected sheet to "document" attribute. By virtue of the attribute change, the apparatus handles the original document as one print job by continuing its reading operation without dividing the original document at the sheet that was erroneously detected as a special sheet.

Maniwa et al. relates to a method of reporting a result of execution of a print job in a network system. In the *Maniwa et al.* method, a printer generates a message indicating a print job is completed or suspended and sends the message to a server via a network interface controller. The message is ultimately displayed at a client apparatus.

Applicants submit that neither *Takeda et al.* nor *Maniwa et al.* addresses the problem of printing a plurality of print jobs having different print settings. *Takeda et al.* merely suggests composing two different print jobs into one print job. However, the two print jobs have the same print settings.

Applicants have found nothing in either *Takeda et al.* and *Maniwa et al.* that would teach or suggest a discrimination unit that analyzes the print setting information of the plurality of print jobs stored by the intermediate code conversion unit when the composition instructing unit instructs the plurality of print jobs to be composed together so as to obtain one composed job, and discriminates whether the plurality of print jobs have a same print setting or different print settings for a certain print setting item for which each print job is allowed to have one unique print setting, a confirmation message display unit that displays, if the discrimination unit discriminates that the plurality of print jobs have different print settings for the print setting item, a confirmation message indicating that the different print settings should be unified to a common print setting, and a setting unifier unit that generates the print setting information for the composed job based on the common print setting, after the confirmation message display unit displays the confirmation message, as recited in Claim 1.

Therefore, even if *Takeda et al.* and *Maniwa et al.* were to be combined in the manner proposed in the Office Action, assuming such combination would even be

permissible, the resulting combination also would fail to teach or suggest at least those features of Claim 1.

Accordingly, Applicants submit that Claim 1 is clearly patentable over *Takeda et al.* and *Maniwa et al.*, whether considered separately or in any permissible combination.
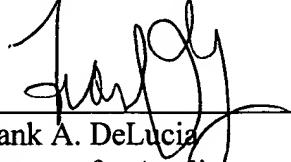
Independent Claims 24, 47, and 70 are method, computer-readable memory medium, and printing data generating program claims respectively corresponding to processor Claim 1, and are believed to be patentable over *Takeda et al.* and *Maniwa et al.* for at least the same reasons as discussed above in connection with Claim 1.

The other claims in this application are each dependent from one or another of the independent claims discussed above and are therefore believed patentable for the same reasons. Since each dependent claim is also deemed to define an additional aspect of the invention, however, the individual reconsideration of the patentability of each on its own merits is respectfully requested.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicants respectfully request favorable reconsideration and early passage to issue of the present application.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our New York office by telephone at (212) 218-2100. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below listed address.

Respectfully submitted,

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